771 considered, follows the chronological order used by this power in the beginning. Similarly, the various skies where Faro reigns are invoked according to their role and the aims of the petitioners /177/ who appeal to them in many cases with very long prayers.

In order not to overload this discussion, a very limited number of rites are described below. Among them, an important place is reserved for those concerning the person (see Ch. 3), which relate to birth, circumcision and excision, funeral rites, and the cult of ancestors. For each one of these the respective positions of the elements composing the individuality at different times have been pointed out.

The rites relating to the ordinary which come next, affect the collective life of the family and village. They concern the residences, the crossroads, and the public squares. They have a very definite character of a gathering together and redistribution of individual forces for the good of the community.

The rain rituals, also collective, which involve the Komo and the Kworè, present a typical example of Bambara symbolism.

Finally, the rituals for "the renewal of the year" have still a more general character: they show close ties uniting individual and community to the cosmos (1).

1. The agricultural rites have not been touched upon in this work as they will be the object of a detailed description in: S. de Ganay, Techniques et rites de l'agriculture chez les Bambara (to be published).

In addition, most of the rituals are duplicated by a series of games of a cosmogonic character which relate to the stages of creation and to its past, present, or future states. See p. 54.

I. Rites Concerning the Person

Birth and Name-Giving

844 From the moment of his birth, a newborn is washed with millet 273 beer mixed with water. The beer has a purifying quality and the ● 271

844 273 271 contact with water which symbolizes "the victory of Faro over Mousso Koroni in the matter of family names" is a prefiguration of name-giving.

851 As soon as the patriarch hears of the birth, he comes and shakes the family pembele over the child's head, three or four times according to the sex, in order to pass on to him the nyama and the qualities of the deceased person from whom he has inherited the ni and the dya. Then, he brings the family altar kere la boli ni into the house of the woman who has just given birth and places it before him. Crouching upon the ground, with fingers spread over the object, he pronounces the following prayer: "You, boli, make me a chief, so that my family prospers, a child is /178/ born, his soul is entrusted to you; I invoke you, boli, night and day" (1).

1. Boli tigi i ka masaya kanu ñe, de wolo la, a ni kalifa be i la, ngo boli ɲu ani kle.

Holding the child on his knees, he places the object on its chest for three consecutive times. Repeating the prayer, he next cuts the throat of a red rooster over the open sac, dips the right index into the blood, and, depending upon whether it is a boy or a girl, makes three or four crosses on the forehead of the newborn who thus becomes the "son of the boli," boli dɛ.

A white sea shell, krokrodya (2), is placed before the newborn

2. Cardita vingens.

and gently moved about to "condense his dya within him." Then it is tied to the child's foot for three or four days according to its sex.

846 824 751 At the same time, the mother who is entrusted with the child's dya until the name-giving ritual, adorns herself during the eight days following the birth with a collar (madya, "dya of the person") made from the odoriferous root of the tree bearing the same name. She will wear it until the child takes its first steps so as to protect it and to recall that she herself carried the soul of the newborn.

553 852 The name is given on the eighth day by the chief of the Komo. Under the dubale, a tree which shelters the village meetings, the elders assemble around the Komo altars which have been carried to the spot (3). If it is a first son, the father gives one hundred kola nuts,